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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/528,209	03/16/2005	Elaine Stephen	8830-328US1 (208102)	4545

23973 7590 10/12/2007
DRINKER BIDDLE & REATH
ATTN: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY GROUP
ONE LOGAN SQUARE
18TH AND CHERRY STREETS
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103-6996

EXAMINER

THOMAS, ALEXANDER S

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1794

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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10/12/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/528,209

Applicant(s)

STEPHEN, ELAINE

Examiner

Alexander Thomas

Art Unit

1794

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 September 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5, 7-18 and 20-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5, 7-18 and 20-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 9/18/07 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. Claim 23 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. There is no original disclosure directed to "a clip having a male portion with a projecting part ...". If the phrase "a clip having" was deleted this rejection could be overcome.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-5, 7-16 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yaeger et al 6,435,931 in view of Nadeau 2,275,983. The primary reference discloses a restraining apparatus for coupling at least two users comprising a spine 18 and at least two lateral extensions 24 adapted to couple respective users by handles 28, wherein the spine includes stiffening members (the projections on spine 18 in Figure 2) which would inherently make the spine more rigid in a vertical plane than in the lateral plane. Nadeau discloses a restraining device comprising a spine 22 and two attachment members 80, 58; see Figures 1 and 2. The attachments members may be a handle 80 or a releasable strap and harness 58,72. Therefore, Nadeau teaches the equivalence of using either a handle or releasable strap and harness as an attachment means. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use harnesses, releasable attachment means and pivotable attachment means in the product of the primary reference instead of or in addition to the handle 28, in view of the teaching in the secondary reference depending on how securely one needs to restrain the child since a smaller child may require more secure restraint than a larger child; see page 2, left column, lines 47-52 of Nadeau. Regarding claims 11 and 12, the lateral extensions in the product of the primary reference would be pivotable to a degree in view of their flexibility. Concerning claim 13, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide extensions on both sides of the spine in the product of the primary reference since a shift in the location of parts is within the general skill of a worker in the art.

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5. Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yaeger et al 6,435,931 in view of Nadeau 2,275,983 as applied to claims 1-5, 7-16, 18 and 22 above, and further in view of Nero 3,563,208. Nero discloses the use of luminous material on tether apparatus in order to enable the users to be seen in the dark; see column 4, lines 21-26. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to apply luminous material to the apparatus of the primary reference in view of the teaching in the secondary reference in order to safely use the product in the dark.

6. Claims 20-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yaeger et al 6,435,931 in view of Nadeau 2,275,983 as applied to claims 1-5, 7-16, 18 and 22 above, and further in view of Gandelman 4,321,734. Gandelman discloses a releasable connector for straps or the like comprising a female socket 14 and projecting male member 16, which includes a resilient locking device. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use a releasably locking device as shown in the secondary reference in place of the buckle 62 on the strap 58 in the product of Yaeger et al/Nadeau to provide a simple operating connection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alexander Thomas whose telephone number is 571-272-1502. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30-4:00 M-THUR.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rena Dye can be reached on 571-272-3186. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Alexander Thomas/
Primary Examiner
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